

MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
April 4, 2006
(approved 5/8/2006)

Vice Chair Richard Nass called the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission to order at 1:07pm in Room 436 of the State House. Members present were Representative Patricia Blanchette, Stephen Bunker, Chief John Dean, Gerry Gay, Geoffrey Maker, Alex McPhedran, Senator Richard Nass, Chief Jethro Pease and Susan Pinette (staff). Members excused included Jay Bradshaw, Representative Richard Brown, Senator Bruce Bryant, Chief Jeffrey Cammack, John Cannon, Art Cleaves, Representative Robert Duplessie, Chief Darrel Fournier, Edward Johnston, David Niklaus, Harty Norris, Charles Soltan, David Wacker and Leslie Wiles. Guests of the Fire Commission were Mike Grant of Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), Paul Gasper of the Maine Association of Police, Mike Williams of the South Portland Fire Department, Harold Smith of the Sanford/Acton Fire Department and Ron Green of the Bangor Fire Department (IAFF 772).

In the absence of a quorum, members agreed to proceed with the April meeting and postpone any votes, including election of officers, to the May meeting.

Committee Reports

The 2006 Spring Conference committee reported the conference went well and thanked Maine Municipal Association (MMA) for their significant contribution. Fire Commission members discussed their thoughts and ideas on sponsoring a conference in 2007. Potential issues were raised regarding the Augusta Civic Center's availability and the possibility of having to schedule the conference earlier in the month.

The Residential Sprinkler committee did not meet last month but members were updated on residential sprinkler related issues and events. Members were informed about the recent conference sponsored by the Cumberland and York County Fire Chiefs to help educate and raise public awareness about the value of residential sprinklers. Members mentioned a conference in Belfast on May 19th that would also be highlighting the importance of residential sprinklers.

Legislative Updates

L.D. 10 **“Resolve, To Fund a Study Regarding Health Care for Maine's Firefighters** remains on the Appropriations table awaiting funding approval.

L.D. 1021 **“An Act To Implement Task Force Recommendations Relating to Parity and Portability of Benefits for Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters”** was reported out of committee with a divided recommendation from the Labor Committee. Members mentioned the coordinated efforts of the 1021 Coalition and the extensive lobbying campaign. Members also discussed the letter that was sent to the Labor Committee.

L.D. 1825 **"An Act To Facilitate Inspections of Heating Appliances and Chimneys" (Emergency)** was originally submitted to the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee to provide liability protection to firefighters who provide inspections and then changes are made to the chimneys. Chief Dean updated members on the status of this legislation and what it means for the State Fire Marshal's Office.

L.D. 1879 **“An Act To Enhance Firefighter Safety”** (*truss construction*) was reported out of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee with an “ought not to pass” recommendation. The bill is now considered dead for this legislative session. Fire Commission members were informed that the CJ/PS committee's reconsideration of the original “ought to pass as amended” recommendation was based on new information that stated there was a problem at the local level with codes. The CJ/PS committee unanimously agreed the problem needed to be resolved locally. Fire Commission members were disappointed with the CJ/PS committee's action and agreed to discuss the issue at a future meeting.

L.D. 2044 **“An Act To Enhance the Protection of Maine Families from Terrorism and Natural Disasters” (Emergency)** remains in the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee.

New Business

Fire Commission members commented on the recent resignations and vacancies and the implications for the future work of the commission. Much of the discussion dealt with the role of Maine Fire Training and Education and their participation on the Fire Commission. The Fire Commission depends on the staff support and technical assistance of the member associations and members expressed concerns whether that participation would continue at the same level. Members spoke of the future challenges for the Fire Commission and the ability to move ahead with important issues to Maine's fire service like residential

sprinklers, bridge health insurance, length -of-service award programs (LOSAPs), truss construction markings and training facilities.

With no further business to come before the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission, Secretary Geoffrey Maker adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Pinette
Staff

FIRE COMMISSION SCHEDULE

Monday, May 1st	Regular Meeting**	Public Safety Building	1pm
Monday, June 5 th	Regular Meeting	Florian Hall	1pm
Monday, July 10 th	Regular Meeting	Florian Hall	1pm
Monday, August 7 th	Regular Meeting	Florian Hall	1pm
Monday, September 11 th	Regular Meeting	Florian Hall	1pm

** Election of Officers